

TDMHDD Update

Lynn McDonald Named Chief Officer of Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute

Commissioner Virginia Trotter Betts announced the promotion of Lynn McDonald to the position of Chief Officer of Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute. McDonald most recently served as the interim Chief Officer at the facility since the promotion of Joe Carobene to the position of Deputy Commissioner for the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities.

Middle Tennessee is one of five state-operated mental health institutes serving adults and adolescents.

"Lynn has worked faithfully at Middle Tennessee for many years," Betts said. "Clearly her experience and knowledge about the facility is invaluable. With her background as an advanced practice nurse, Lynn understands the strong importance of achieving quality clinical outcomes for the many complex people we serve."



McDonald

Beginning her career as a registered nurse at Western Mental Health Institute in Bolivar, McDonald has worked in the department since 1973. Three years later, she accepted a nursing position at Middle Tennessee and has worked in a number of roles at the facility since that time. In her last position as Assistant Superintendent for Program Services,

McDonald was responsible for leading a number of areas including the administrative direction of acute, extended, forensic and children and youth treatment programs.

"I am excited about this opportunity and since my beginnings as a nurse in the department, I feel like I have come full-circle. I am excited to work in this new position and I look forward to working with Commissioner Betts. As a nurse, she understands patient care and I believe our department is well-positioned to take on new challenges under her leadership," McDonald said.

A clinical instructor, McDonald also teaches at Vanderbilt University School of Nursing, Tennessee Technological University and is a frequent lecturer at other schools of nursing. She also trains law enforcement and jail personnel on understanding and responding to persons with psychosis.

McDonald holds an Associate of Arts degree in Nursing from the University of Tennessee at Martin and a Master of Science degree in Nursing from Vanderbilt University.



Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute

Saving Lives in Tennessee



The Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network's statewide conference, this Spring, brought nearly 350 attendees together to work toward finding solutions of curbing suicide in the state. The two-day workshop conference was held... *cont. page 2*

Housing Within Reach Oversight Committee Convenes

Gathered from communities throughout the state, members of The Statewide Oversight Committee for the Real Choice Systems Change grant, Housing within Reach, met for the first time May 6.

Representing stakeholders from a myriad of venues including the consumer community, private and public sectors and state legislature, committee members reviewed and discussed goals and objectives of the grant and began to identify ways to make good use of each member's experience and perspective.

The two primary goals of the Real Choice Systems Change (RCSC), Housing within Reach program are:

1) Design and implement an effective, consumer directed, and accessible housing resource system for Tennesseans diagnosed with mental illness and co-occurring disorders, thus increasing the number of persons in quality, affordable housing.

2) Effectively reduce the stigma of mental illness and co-occurring disorders statewide to provide a more welcoming environment for all of Tennessee's citizens.

The Oversight Committee members were asked by Deborah Wolkhamer, director of

the RCSC grant, in addition to their general oversight responsibilities, to consider task areas for which they have particular interest and/or expertise and then subsequently lend that expertise to

those areas, as needed. One of these task areas include hiring consumers as Consumer Housing Specialists in each of the four targeted application cities of Memphis, Jackson, Chattanooga and Nashville.

At this time, Jodie Mack, Memphis; Wayne Snelling, Jackson; Gina Turley, Chattanooga and Louetta Hix, Nashville have been hired.

Other objectives include:

- The creation of a comprehensive Housing Resource Website, supplying practical housing information, designed to assist mental health consumers and providers in obtaining appropriate housing.
- Supplying hardware for web-based work centers in drop-in centers in the four targeted areas.
- An annual "Housing Academy" for consumers, providers, agencies, local housing developers and other stakeholders to provide intensive training on utilizing housing resources.
- A longitudinal evaluation project which will assess the changing housing and care needs of persons moving from institutions to the community.
- The creation and implementation of a broad-based, high quality, primetime television, mass media campaign to change community attitudes and misconceptions regarding community housing for persons with mental illness and co-occurring disorders.

Successful completion of the Housing within Reach grant program activities will positively impact and

improve the lives of persons diagnosed with mental illness and co-occurring disorders in Tennessee.



**HOUSING
WITHIN
REACH**

...Saving Lives continued

at the Woodmont Hills Church in Nashville.

Commissioner Virginia Trotter Betts' leadership, dedication and ongoing efforts in suicide prevention were celebrated at the conference dinner held the night before.

Receiving commendations from Congressman Harold E. Ford, Jr., United States House of Representatives Ninth Congressional District of Tennessee and the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network, Betts was thanked for her tireless efforts as a national and state leader and stalwart proponent for improvements in health and mental health policy.

Among many of Betts' accomplishments that were cited was her role in the development of the Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent Suicide. It was because of this effort national attention was brought to a tragically needed area while also facilitating the development of national suicide prevention strategies in use today.

"We feel that her time and personal investment in our cause has truly made a difference," said Scott Ridgway, M.S., director of the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network. "We look forward to future participation with her in the network's goals and the continued prevention of suicide."



Rejection Affects Thought Processes

Sometimes you might notice that one of your fellow employees is left out of conversations, eats lunch alone or doesn't seem to have a friend in the department. Is that any of your business? Consider this:

Psychologists at Case Western Reserve University say interpersonal rejection can dramatically reduce the capacity for intelligent thought. It is so apparent to researchers that they wonder if reasoning skills evolved to help us navigate the complexities of social life rather than help us solve technical problems.

After taking a personality test in one study, one group of subjects was told they would die alone. The other group was told to expect lasting friendships. Subjects who thought they would have a solitary life were significantly impaired in performing complex reasoning tasks. They were also slower and less accurate in their responses to a timed IQ test.

The report, published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, said the effect was similar to the cognitive impairment caused by head injuries.

In a related study, rejected people took greater risks and made more unhealthy choices rather than taking better care of themselves.

Study leaders conclude that excluded individuals are so busy trying to suppress emotional distress that they are unable to engage in controlled thinking.



If you can arrange to include a socially rejected employee in more socialized activities, you could be rewarded with one who thinks better and works better.

Mental Health Facts...

you may or may not know

- Half (50 percent) of all Americans will experience a mental disorder at some point in their lives. (Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health)
- One in five children has a diagnosable emotional disorder and one in 10 has a serious disorder. Less than one-third get appropriate care. (Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health)
- The incidence of suicide among 15-24 year olds has tripled since 1960. (Centers for Disease Control, 1997)
- Between 118,700 and 186,600 youths in the United States who are involved in the juvenile justice system have at least one mental disorder (National Coalition for the Mentally Ill in the Criminal Justice System).
- Mental illness is the second leading cause of disability. (Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health)
- Among Americans age 18-54, 14.9 percent have anxiety disorders, 7.1 percent have mood disorders and 1.3 percent have schizophrenia. (Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health)
- Up to one half of all visits to primary care physicians are because of conditions caused or exacerbated by mental health problems. (National Mental Health Association, 1999)

Happenings

WMHI Announces New Assistant Superintendents

Roger Pursley, Chief Officer of Western Mental Health Institute (WMHI) announced that Clara Manley, Assistant Superintendent for Program Services, has accepted the new position of Assistant Superintendent for Quality Management effective April 1, 2003.

"The newly established position is crucial for the management of WMHI, as we move forward with new survey and compliance requirements for JCAHO, CMS and HIPAA," Pursley said. "Ms. Manley will begin to develop and expand her area of responsibility, which will include the following: Health Information Systems, Patient Rights Advocate, Risk Management/Infection Control, Mental Health Standards Coordinator, Utilization Management, HIPAA Compliance, Performance Improvement and Safety."

Manley will also be responsible for WMHI's on-going preparation and planning for JCAHO and Medicare compliance, in addition to other local state and regulatory agencies.

Ernest Jones was appointed to the position of Assistant Superintendent for Program Services in May.

Said Pursley, "I am very pleased with the Executive Leadership's selection of Mr. Jones to fill the final vacancy on the Leadership Committee. I am confident that Ernest will further strengthen the management team and add positively to the future course and direction of Western. He is well respected by his peers and is perceived as a valuable asset to our hospital."

Ridgeview Welcomes New Psychiatrist

Okon Enyenihi, M.D., has joined the medical staff of Ridgeview, a community mental health center, based in Oak Ridge.

Dr. Enyenihi is from Nigeria where he earned a medical degree at the University of Calabar - College of Medicine, Cross River State. He was in family practice for ten years in Nigeria and the West Indies before completing a residency in psychiatry at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center. He has extensive medical experience across different cultures, including involvement in numerous drug trials while at LSUHSC. Enyenihi is board eligible in psychiatry.

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